

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
 IO-13 ACDA-07 OMB-01 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
 /079 W

-----041707Z 059539 /45

O P 041600Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2601
INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 0686

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PFOR, ET, US
SUBJ: MENGISTU RALLIES MASSES TO DEFENSE OF MOTHERLAND

SUMMARY: LARGE CROWD TURNED OUT ON SHORT NOTICE AFTERNOON FEB 4 FOR GOVT-ORGANIZED RALLY TO DEMONSTRATE PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR EXECUTION YESTERDAY OF FORMER PMAC CHAIRMAN TEFERI BANTE AND SIX OTHER PMAC MEMBERS AND TO APPEAL FOR NATIONAL UNITY IN RESUMING MILITARY OFFENSIVE AGAINST ETHIOPIA'S INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ENEMIES. CROWD WAS ORDERLY, EVEN ENTHUSIASTIC, WITH NO ANTI-GOVT INCIDENTS OBSERVED. PMAC 1ST VICE CHAIRMAN MENGISTU HAILE-MARIAM, WHO DELIVERED PRINCIPAL SPEECH, SEEMED TO ENJOY HIS NEW POSITION OF POWER AS ACTING CHIEF OF STATE. DURING SPEECH, HE AGAIN SHARPLY CRITICIZED DISSIDENT ETHIOPIAN GROUPS, SUDAN, SOMALIA, SAUDI ARABIA, AND THEIR IMPERIALIST BACKERS, WITH ESPECIALLY HEAVY BLASTS DIRECTED AGAINST EPRP. MENGISTU ALSO MADE ONE BRIEF DEROGATORY REFERENCE TO CIA, BUT ANTI-US PLACARDS WERE LESS EVIDENT THAN AT JAN 30 RALLY. 2ND VICE CHAIRMAN
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ATNAFU ABATE DID NOT MAKE AN APPEARANCE. END SUMMARY.

1. ON SIX HOURS NOTICE, OVER 100,000 PEOPLE ASSEMBLED AT REVOLUTION SQUARE IN ADDIS ABABA AFTERNOON FEB 4 IN IMPRESSIVE PUBLIC DISPLY THAT THOSE PMAC MEMBERS EMERGING VICTORIOUS FROM YESTERDAY'S TRUGGLE HAVE MAINTAINED EFFECTIVE CONTROL OF GOVT AND PUBLIC ORDER. KEBELE MEMBERS, WORKERS, AND OTHER

SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS MARCHED CHEERFULLY IN ORDERLY COLUMNS TO AND FROM RALLY, SHOWING NO SIGNS OF DISAFFECTION OVER LOSS OF THEIR CHIEF OF STATE AND OTHER LEADERS UNDER VIOLENT CIRCUMSTANCES. SPOKESMAN IN STADIUM AROUSED CHANTING CONDEMNATORY OF PMAC TRAITORS, EPRP, EDU, IMPERIALISM, BUREAUCRATIC CAPITALISM AND FEUDALISM.

2. RALLY TOOK SAME FORMAT AS JAN 30 GATHERING, WITH SPEAKERS FROM LABOR, KEBELES, AND PEASANT ORGANIZATIONS (NO POMOA THIS TIME), PRECEDING PMAC VICE CHAIRMAN MENGISTU, WHO SPOKE FOR REMAINDER OF DIRG. ALTHOUGH MIDDAY NEWS REPORTED THAT 2ND VICE CHAIRMAN ATNAFU ABATE HAD RETURNED TO ADDIS AND WOULD COOPERATE CLOSELY WITH MENGISTU, ATNAFU DID NOT APPEAR AT STADIUM. FROM TOP LEADERSHIP, ONLY LEGAL/ADMIN AFFAIRS CHAIRMAN MAJ. BERHANU BAYEH WAS IDENTIFIED WITH MENGISTU ON ROSTRUM.

3. THERE WAS NO SPARING OF EPRP THIS TIME. ALL SPEAKERS TOOK TURNS LISTING EPRP, EDU, AND ELF AS DOMESTIC ENEMIES OF REVOLUTION, AND SAUDI ARABIA TOOK ITS PLACE ALONGSIDE SUDAN AND SOMALIA AS FOREIGN POWERS SEEKING TO ACHIEVE DISMEMBERMENT OF ETHIOPIAN MOTHERLAND. REFERENCES TO DECEASED PLOTTERS WERE FOR MOST PART IN SAME VEIN AS THIS QUOTE FROM MENGISTU SPEECH: "A CONSPIRACY IS BEING MADE AGAINST ETHIOPIA. LEADERS OF THIS CONSPIRACY ARE A FEW TRAITORS WHO WERE ON PMAC AND THEIR COLLABORATORS, THE RIFFRAFF(?) EPRP, EDU, ELF, REACTIONARY NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES AND THOSE WHO ARE OVERALL GUARDS FOR THEM, THE IMPERIALISTS."

4. MENGISTU'S SPEECH EMPHASIZED THAT AS RESULT YESTERDAY'S
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EVENTS, REVOLUTION WAS BEING CONSOLIDATED, NOT REVERSED. HE CALLED ON NATION TO LINE UP ALONGSIDE MEN IN UNIFORM IN RESUMING MILITARY OFFENSIVE AGAINST ETHIOPIA'S ENEMIES AND PROMISED ARMS TO ALL WHO WISHED TO BEAR THEM TO CARRY ON STRUGGLE. HE AGAIN ACCUSED NIMEIRI OF ARMING ERITREAN SECESSIONISTS. ANTI-US OVERTONES OF RALLY WERE SUBDUED AND CONSISTED OF SMALLER NUMBER OF SAME PLACARDS SEEN ON JAN 30, SOME OF WHICH WERE READ OVER RADIO, AND ONE BRIEF REFERENCE TOWARDS END OF MENGISTU'S SPEECH, AS FOLLOWS: "EXCEPT FOR OUR REVOLUTION, THERE IS NO REASON FOR SAUDI ARABIAN KINGS AND NOBLES, SUDANESE ANTI-COMMUNISTS AND CAPITALISTS AND OTHER REACTIONARIES TO CONSPIRE IN VAIN CONSPIRACY WITH EDU, EPRP AND ALSO ELF UNDER COORDINATION OF CIA, NOR FOR HATRED WHICH THEY SHOW OUR COUNTRY."

5. MENGISTU WAS CLEARLY IN CHARGE. THROUGHOUT RALLY HE WAS SMILING BROADLY AND CLEARLY ENJOYED HIS NEW ROLE AS TOP MAN. RALLY BROKE UP SMOOTHLY AND TONIGHT ADDIS IS ONCE AGAIN QUITE CALM.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 04-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Executive Order: GS
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TAGS: PINS, PFOR, ET, US, (MENGISTU HAILE MARIAM), (TEFERI BANTE)
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